

can tell you even more than that. They are outstanding people and public servants. Steven Walther is from Nevada. He is one of those people who is in public service because he wants to do something to help his country. He has been very active for many years in State bar activities, very involved in the ABA activities, and he gave up a lucrative law practice to come here. He was a senior partner in a major law firm in Nevada. He did this for the right reason.

Both Cynthia and Steven are patient individuals. Steve Walther was first recommended to the President by me for this position on July 6, 2005. That is almost 3 years ago.

He waited almost 3 years for the full Senate to confirm him.

I recommended Ms. Bauerly to the President in July 2007. She has waited for confirmation over 11 months.

I cannot say enough nice things about Steven Walther. I want everyone within the sound of my voice to understand what a man of integrity he is. He is not even a Democrat. He is an Independent. But I have such confidence in his fairness that it did not matter what his party affiliation is. He is a fine individual, has a wonderful family, a son Wyatt who is getting used to the big city of Washington, DC.

I so appreciate Steve waiting since January with basically no job. He has had no paycheck. There has been no FEC. Some people dropped off because they couldn't afford to not have a job. But fortunately, for the FEC and our country, Steven Walther could afford to be unemployed for 6 months.

Again, I want the record spread with my appreciation for Steven Walther's public service and his friendship to me. These two individuals, Bauerly and Walther, have shown exceptional patience which will be an asset to them in their work as Commissioners. I wish them and the FEC very well.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATIONS OF STEVEN T. WALTHER, CYNTHIA L. BAUERLY, CAROLINE C. HUNTER, DONALD F. MCGAHN, AND MATTHEW S. PETERSEN TO BE MEMBERS OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 306, 624, 625, and 626; that the Rules Committee be discharged from further consideration of PN 1765, the nomination of Matthew Petersen; that the Senate proceed en bloc to consideration of the nominations; that the Senate then proceed to vote on confirmation of the nominations in the order listed; that upon confirmation of the nominations, the motions to reconsider be laid on the table en bloc, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's ac-

tion, with no further motions in order, and the Senate then resume legislative session, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the first nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Steven T. Walther, of Nevada, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Steven T. Walther, of Nevada, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Cynthia L. Bauerly, of Minnesota, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Cynthia L. Bauerly, of Minnesota, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Caroline C. Hunter, of Florida, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Caroline C. Hunter, of Florida, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Donald F. McGahn, of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Donald F. McGahn, of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the last nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Matthew S. Petersen, of Utah, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Matthew S. Petersen, of Utah, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The majority leader.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 3186 AND H.R. 6331

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding there are two bills at the desk. I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bills by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows.

A bill (S. 3186) to provide funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

A bill (H.R. 6331) to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to extend expiring provisions under the Medicare Program, to improve beneficiary access to preventive and mental health services, to enhance low-income benefit programs, and to maintain access to care in rural areas, including pharmacy access, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am going to object to my own request en bloc, but prior to the Chair accepting my objection, I want everyone to know that S. 3186 is the Warm in Winter and Cool in Summer Act, which is LIHEAP. That is an important piece of legislation. We are going to work very hard to figure out a way to do that within the next 30 days. I would also say that H.R. 6331, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act, is a bill that overwhelmingly passed the House of Representatives to take care of the so-called doctors' fix.

I now ask for their second reading en bloc, and I object to my own request en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bills will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time to count postcloture.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

FISA AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2008

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in favor of the passage of the FISA Amendments Act of 2008. This is a law that our Nation needs. The most important change made by the pending